

Do You Have A Picky Eater At Home?

A Guide to Happier Meal Times



You may not believe it, but your little one won't always be a picky eater. Don't give up hope. There are ways to get through this stage. Try these ideas.

"He doesn't eat much and sometimes he skips meals."

Children are smart eaters. They eat only when they're hungry and stop when full. Don't worry if your child skips meals sometimes. It's okay; he'll make up for it at the next meal. Remember: your child's tummy is not as big as yours. He won't eat as much as you.

Listen to your child. He'll tell you when he wants no more to eat. He'll turn his face away. He'll get distracted. Or he'll just stop eating. A child is eating enough if he is growing, sleeping well, and playing hard.



"She won't try new foods."

Let your child try new foods a few times. It will take a few tries for her to see if she likes them.

Here's how to give new foods to your child.

- ✓ Kids love food with shape and color. Arrange them nicely on the plate.
- ✓ Set a good example. Try the new food, too.
- ✓ Serve new foods at the start of the meal when she's most hungry.
- ✓ Put a new food with a favorite food. She'll be more likely to eat both.
- ✓ Use small portions. Trying to have "just a taste" is easier than eating a large portion.

Don't give up! Try the new food again at other meals. Children will try and like foods they know.



"He eats the same thing at every meal."

Does your child ask for peanut butter and jelly or pizza at every meal? Most children go through this phase as they grow.

These ideas should help you.

- ☺ Let your child help you fix the meal. He will be more eager to try new foods.
- ☺ Pick a meal or snack time when he can have his favorite food.
- ☺ If he won't eat what you fix, let him down from the table. Give him water until snack time. Don't feel bad. This is how he'll learn to eat what is served. It will take a few tries, but he will learn. (If this is too hard for you, give him a few bites of his food with what is served. Ask him to try his favorite food and yours.)

"She's never hungry at meal time."

A child's appetite can change like the weather. It does no good to force your child to eat at meal time. There may be a reason why she can't eat her meals. Try serving less food at snack time. She may be hungrier for meals

Try these tips for snacks.

If she doesn't eat a meal, ask her to try "just a little taste." Make sure she knows she must wait for snack time to eat next.

Serve snacks about 1 ½ to 2 hours before meals.

Make sure she doesn't fill up on juice or milk between meals.

Serve two snacks if the next meal is really far off (like an early lunch and a late dinner).

Serve snacks in the same place all the time. Don't snack and watch TV.

Give these snack ideas a try:

Celery sticks or apple slices with peanut butter "dip"

Berries with milk

String cheese and a mini bagel

Fruit Smoothie (blend banana slices, strawberries, and vanilla yogurt)

Fruit juice popsicles

Apple slices with yogurt "dip"

Cereal and fruit

